



FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2020

Andorra

FREE

94

/100

<u>Political Rights</u>	39 /40
<u>Civil Liberties</u>	55 /60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

94 /100 Free

Global freedom statuses are calculated on a weighted scale. See the methodology.



Overview

Andorra has a parliamentary system of government and regularly holds free and fair elections. Political rights and civil liberties are generally respected. However, the country has strict naturalization criteria, and more than 50 percent of the population consists of noncitizens who do not have the right to vote. Among other outstanding concerns, abortion remains completely prohibited, and there is a notable wage gap between men and women. The small Muslim and Jewish communities lack dedicated cemeteries, and the country has no recognized mosque.

Key Developments in 2019

- In February, the parliament adopted a law on equal treatment, banning all forms of discrimination and specifying measures to prevent, correct, and eliminate improper bias in the public and private sectors. The law was intended especially to address discrimination against women and included a provision guaranteeing equal pay for equal work.
- The incumbent center-right Democrats for Andorra (DA) party lost its majority in the April parliamentary elections, but it formed a new coalition government with two smaller parties.
- Debate about Andorra's total ban on abortion intensified during the year, with hundreds of people participating in demonstrations in March and September to call for decriminalization.
- Authorities continued working to address long-standing concerns about abuse of the country's banking system. Among other ongoing legal and regulatory changes, the parliament in November adopted legislation to strengthen safeguards against money laundering and terrorist financing.

Political Rights

[TOP](#)

A. Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

4/4

Andorra has a parliamentary system, with a prime minister elected by and accountable to the legislature. The legitimacy of the prime minister, usually the head of the party with the most seats, rests largely on the conduct of parliamentary elections, which have historically been competitive and credible. Xavier Espot Zamora, the new leader of the ruling DA party, was chosen as prime minister in May 2019 following the previous month's elections. The DA had lost its parliamentary majority, but it formed a coalition government with two smaller liberal parties. Espot replaced outgoing prime minister Antoni Martí Petit, who had held the post since 2011.

Two unelected “co-princes,” the French president and the Roman Catholic bishop of La Seu d’Urgell, Spain, serve jointly as Andorra’s ceremonial heads of state.

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

4/4

Members of the unicameral, 28-member Consell General are directly elected every four years through a mixed voting system. In the April 2019 elections, the DA led with 11 seats, followed by the Social Democratic Party (PS) with 7, the Liberals of Andorra (LA) and the new conservative party Third Way (TV) with 4 each, and the new social-liberal party Committed Citizens (CC) with 2. The LA and CC joined the DA in the new governing coalition. The polls were generally considered competitive, credible, well administered.

TOP**A3** 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?

4/4

The Electoral Law, which was last changed in 2014 to introduce regulations on campaign finance, provides a sound framework for free and fair elections. The Electoral Board supervises elections impartially. However, the law does not provide a formal role for international or citizen observers.

B. Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

4/4

Political parties may form and operate freely, and there are a number of active parties in Andorra. Two new parties, TV and CC, made their debut in the 2019 elections.

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

4/4

The country has experienced multiple democratic transfers of power between rival parties, most recently in 2011, when the DA replaced a government led by the PS. Opposition parties are well represented in the Consell General and deprived the DA of its outright majority in the 2019 elections.

B3 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?

TOP

4/4

Citizens and political figures are generally able to make political choices without undue interference from external forces.

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, religious, gender, LGBT, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

3/4

More than 50 percent of the population consists of noncitizens—mostly from nearby states—who do not have the right to vote in national elections or run for elected office. Under Andorra's restrictive naturalization criteria, one must marry a resident Andorran or live in the country for more than 20 years to qualify for citizenship. Prospective citizens are also required to learn Catalan, the national language.

There are no specific policies to encourage the political participation of women, but women are active in politics, and after the 2019 elections they held 50 percent of the seats in the legislature. LGBT+ people are also free to participate in politics, and a number of parties advocate for their interests.

C. Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

4/4

The elected government and parliament exercise their powers without improper influence from unelected or nonstate actors. However, in 2018 the Vatican reportedly warned the prime minister that the bishop of La Seu d'Urgell would have to abdicate as co-prince if Andorra legalized abortion.

TOP

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?

4/4

Government corruption is not viewed as a pressing issue in Andorra. Over the past several years, the country has adopted reforms to address concerns raised in a 2011 report by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) about bribery and campaign finance. The government has also made progress on financial-sector reforms designed to prevent abuses of the country's banking system that could facilitate either domestic or transnational corruption. A law that renounced banking secrecy and required certain disclosures about accounts held by nonresidents entered into force at the start of 2018. In November 2019, the parliament adopted legislation to strengthen existing safeguards against money laundering and terrorist financing.

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?

4/4

There is no legal guarantee of public access to government information. However, the government is generally transparent in practice; among other resources, it publishes a regular bulletin, accessible online, that documents government activity, budgetary processes, public procurement, and asset disclosures. Since 2017 the Ministry of Territorial Planning has sponsored a participatory budget process, allowing members of the public to help set spending priorities.

Civil Liberties

D. Freedom of Expression and Belief ^{TOP}

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media?**3/4**

There are a number of daily and weekly newspapers, and the country's only domestic television station is operated by the public broadcaster Ràdio i Televisió d'Andorra. Residents have access to a variety of foreign media services. While press freedom is generally respected, business, political, and religious interests have historically influenced media coverage; reporting on the activities of Andorra's banks has been particularly difficult.

D2 0-4 pts**Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?****3/4**

Freedom of religion is generally upheld, but the Roman Catholic Church enjoys a privileged position that allows it to draw on some state support and to bypass some bureaucratic processes that other faith groups must adhere to.

Despite years of negotiations between the Muslim community and the government, there is no recognized mosque for the country's roughly 2,000 Muslims. The government has organized meetings with Jewish and Muslim communities to discuss the possible establishment of a special cemetery where those groups could conduct burials according to their customs and beliefs, but there has been little progress on the proposal.

D3 0-4 pts**Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?****-****TOP**

There are no restrictions on academic freedom, and the educational system is free from indoctrination.

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?

4/4

There are no significant constraints on personal expression or freedom of private discussion. Authorities are not known to illegally monitor private online communications.

E. Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly?

4/4

Andorran law provides for freedom of assembly, and the government respects this right in practice. Demonstrations against government policy and in response to other social and political controversies take place on occasion. In March and September 2019, protests against Andorra's strict prohibition on abortion drew hundreds of participants.

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?

4/4

Various nongovernmental organizations are active in the country and function without restriction. Human rights groups freely publish their findings and advocate for improvements.

TOP

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor

organizations?	3/4
----------------	-----

The right to unionize is protected by law and the constitution, and a new labor law that took effect in February 2019 established regulations for collective bargaining and the right to strike. However, unions and the political opposition characterized the law as a setback, arguing in part that it placed unnecessary constraints on the right to strike. There are no laws in place to penalize antiunion discrimination.

In 2018, Andorra saw its first major strike in 85 years, when civil servants walked out to protest reforms to their contracts proposed by the Martí government.

F. Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary?	4/4
------------------------------------	-----

The judiciary is impartial and independent, and is generally free from pressure from the government. Judges are appointed and supervised by the Higher Council of Justice; the two co-princes, the speaker of parliament, and the prime minister each select one of the council's five members, and the fifth is elected by judges and magistrates.

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters?	4/4
---	-----

Defendants enjoy the presumption of innocence and the right to a fair trial, and due process is generally upheld in the criminal justice system. The constitution prohibits arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, but police can detain suspects for up to 48 hours without charge.

TOP

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?

4/4

Andorra is free from war and insurgencies, and law enforcement agents are not known to use excessive force against civilians. Prison conditions are adequate.

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

3/4

In February 2019, the parliament adopted a law on equal treatment and nondiscrimination. While it was focused primarily on combating gender discrimination, it included comprehensive protections against discrimination based on race, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and other such categories; the legislation also featured enforcement mechanisms, including fines. To address a persistent gender pay gap estimated at 22 percent and as high as 40 percent in some sectors, the new law specifically required equal pay for equal work.

Andorra provides temporary protection and services to refugees and asylum seekers, but there is no law allowing the government to grant asylum or refugee status.

G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts**TOP**

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?

4/4

There are no restrictions on freedom of movement, and people are generally free to change their place of residence, employment, and education.

G2 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?	4/4
--	------------

The legal and regulatory framework is generally supportive of property rights and entrepreneurship, and there are few undue obstacles to private business activity in practice.

G3 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?	3/4
--	------------

Personal social freedoms are generally respected, though there are some restrictions for same-sex couples, who can form civil unions but not marry or adopt children. Domestic violence is prohibited by law and punishable with prison sentences; the government pursues domestic violence cases and provides resources for victims. Nevertheless, such violence remains a serious problem, and sometimes involves violence against children.

Andorra remains one of the few countries in Europe where abortion is completely prohibited, with penalties for both doctors and women who undergo the procedure. Abortion is relatively accessible in neighboring France and Spain, though this option can be expensive for Andorrans.

TOP

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?	4/4
---	------------

Andorran laws provide protections for most workers, including migrant workers. However, temporary workers are in a precarious position, as they must leave the country when their employment contract expires, exposing those with expired contracts to potential abuse by employers. The Labor Inspections Office is proactive in addressing violations of workers' rights.

A 2019 report from the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) found that Andorra had made legislative and policy progress on combating trafficking, but called on authorities to scrutinize high-risk sectors for possible victims and raise awareness of the threat among law enforcement bodies. No cases of trafficking had been confirmed in the country as of mid-2019.

On Andorra

See all data, scores & information on this country or territory.

See More >

Country Facts

Global Freedom Score

94/100 Free

Other Years

2019

**Be the first to
know what's
happening.**

Join the Freedom House
monthly newsletter

Email

TOP

Subscribe

ADDRESS

1850 M St. NW Floor 11
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 296-5101

GENERAL INQUIRIES

info@freedomhouse.org

PRESS & MEDIA

press@freedomhouse.org

@2020 FreedomHouse

TOP